UNITED
NATIONS

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Economic and Social
Council

Distr.
GENERAL

E/CN.4/Sub.2/1994/NGO/35
22 August 1994

Original: ENGLISH

COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS
Sub-Commission on Prevention of
Discrimination and Protection
of Minorities
Forty-sixth session
Agenda item 6

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS, INCLUDING POLICIES OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION AND SEGREGATION AND OF APARTHEID, IN ALL COUNTRIES, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES: REPORT OF THE SUB-COMMISSION UNDER COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS RESOLUTION 8 (XXIII)

Joint written statement submitted by the Commission for the Defense of Human Rights in Central America, Pax Romana and Service Peace and Justice in Latin America, non-governmental organizations in consultative status (category II), and by International Educational Development, the International Federation of ACAT and the Movement against Racism and for Friendship among Peoples, non-governmental organization on the Roster

The Secretary-General has received the following communication, which is circulated in accordance with Economic and Social Council resolution 1296 (XLIV).

[1 August 1994]

The situation in Sri Lanka

1. For the past 10 years the Sub-Commission has heard hundreds of statements raising grave concern at the failure to resolve the armed conflict on the island of Sri Lanka. Yet the conflict continues and innocent lives continue to be lost.

2. During recent months the Sri Lankan Government has intensified its indiscriminate aerial bombardment of the north of the Tamil homeland and the three-year-old economic blockade continues. Since the last session of the Sub-Commission, several hundred Tamils have been arrested in the east of the Tamil homeland by Sri Lanka's military and paramilitary forces and many have "disappeared". Recent Amnesty International reports confirm that in Colombo thousands of young Tamils have been arbitrarily arrested and detained.

3. At the same time the Sri Lankan Government plans to hold local government elections in the east on 1 March at a time when several thousand Tamils have been displaced from the East (see E/CN.4/1994/44/Add.1) and have sought refuge in the north of the Tamil homeland.

4. The Sri Lankan Government has rejected a number of offers to mediate including one made in August 1993 by four Nobel Laureates. The Government continues with its military operations against the Tamil people and the Sri Lankan President continues to insist that there is no ethnic problem.

5. In the view of the submitting organizations the situation on the island is extremely serious and demands the urgent attention of the Sub-Commission. We request the Sub-Commission to adopt a resolution calling upon the two parties to the conflict, the Government of Sri Lanka and the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, to enter into a cease-fire and to commence negotiations with a view to establishing peace in the island and securing the right to self-determination of the Tamil people.